



WILLIAM
ROBINSON
GALLERY

WILLIAM ROBINSON GENESIS

GENESIS

WILLIAM ROBINSON

WILLIAM ROBINSON GALLERY QUT





WILLIAM
ROBINSON
GALLERY

GENESIS

WILLIAM ROBINSON

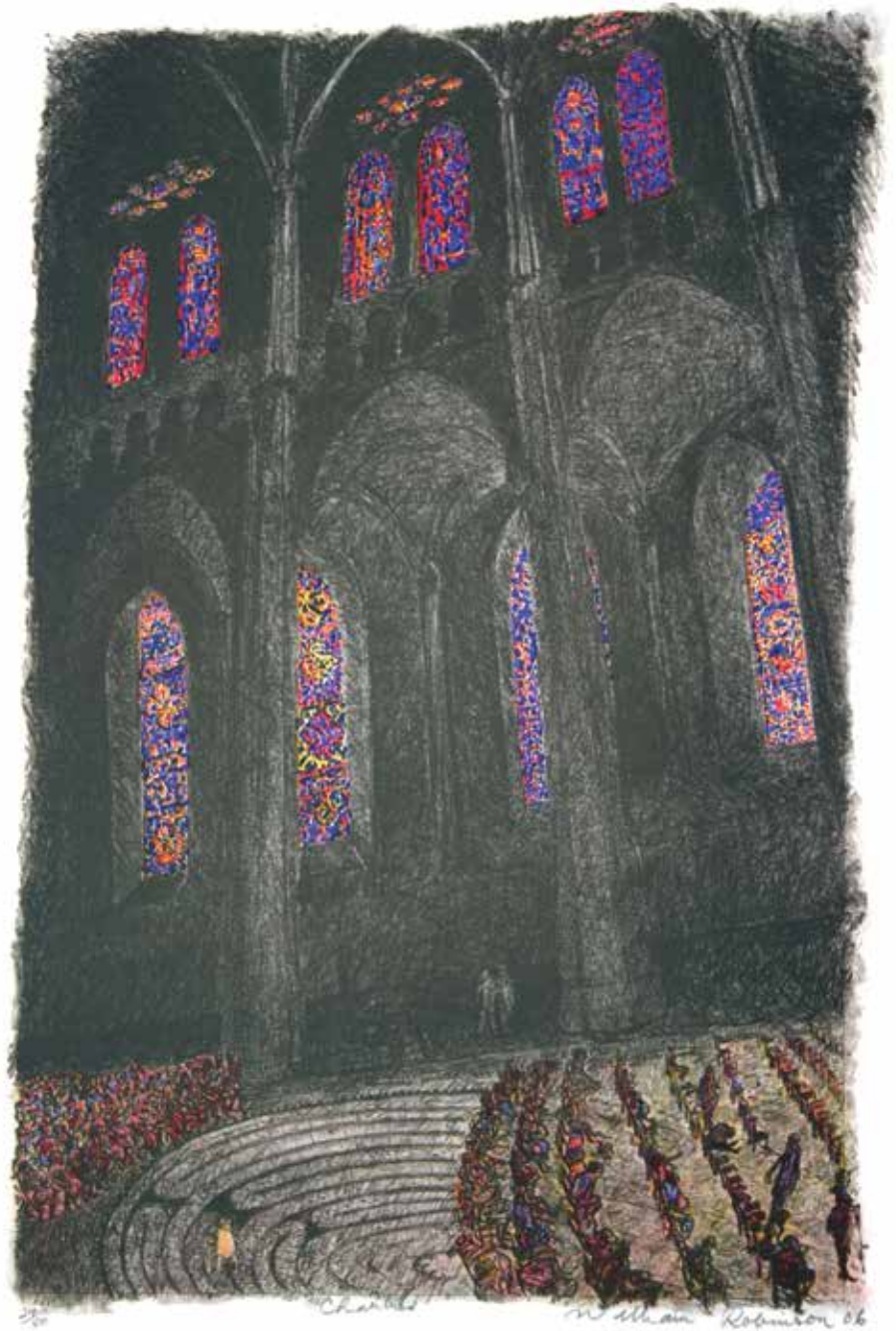
THE GENESIS OF BUTTERFLIES

Victor Hugo

The dawn is smiling on the dew that covers
The tearful roses; lo, the little lovers
That kiss the buds, and all the flutterings
In jasmine bloom, and privet, of white wings,
That go and come, and fly, and peep and hide,
With muffled music, murmured far and wide.
Ah, the Spring time, when we think of all the lays
That dreamy lovers send to dreamy mays,
Of the fond hearts within a billet bound,
Of all the soft silk paper that pens wound,
The messages of love that mortals write
Filled with intoxication of delight,
Written in April and before the May time
Shredded and flown, playthings for the wind's playtime,
We dream that all white butterflies above,
Who seek through clouds or waters souls to love,
And leave their lady mistress in despair,
To flit to flowers, as kinder and more fair,
Are but torn love-letters, that through the skies
Flutter, and float, and change to butterflies.¹

¹ Victor Hugo, "The genesis of butterflies" (Andrew Lang, Trans.), (poem), c.1840.

Chartres 2006
lithograph 56.5 x 38.5cm
QUT Art Collection
Gift of the artist under the
Cultural Gifts Program, 2008







The sea with morning sun from Springbrook 1996
oil on linen 137.5 x 183cm
QUT Art Collection
Purchased 2013 through the William Robinson
Art Collection Fund and partial donation by
Michael Gleeson-White





To the sea: Morning sun 1998
lithograph 40 x 50cm
QUT Art Collection
Gift of the artist under the
Cultural Gifts Program, 2002

Springbrook to the sea 2002
coloured pastels 31 x 41cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Springbrook to the sea 1997
watercolour 18 x 36cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Landscape 19 1987
watercolour 56 x 76cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Landscape 3 1986
watercolour 76 x 66cm
Private collection, Brisbane



FOREWORD

Professor Susan Street AO
Executive Director
QUT Precincts

¹ Quentin Bryce, “Introduction,” in William Robinson: Inspirations (Brisbane: William Robinson Gallery, QUT, 2015), 2.

In April 2016, William Robinson celebrated his 80th birthday. While this important artist shows no indication of slowing down, it is worth taking a moment to honour his many and varied successes that led to the new exhibition, *William Robinson: Genesis*.

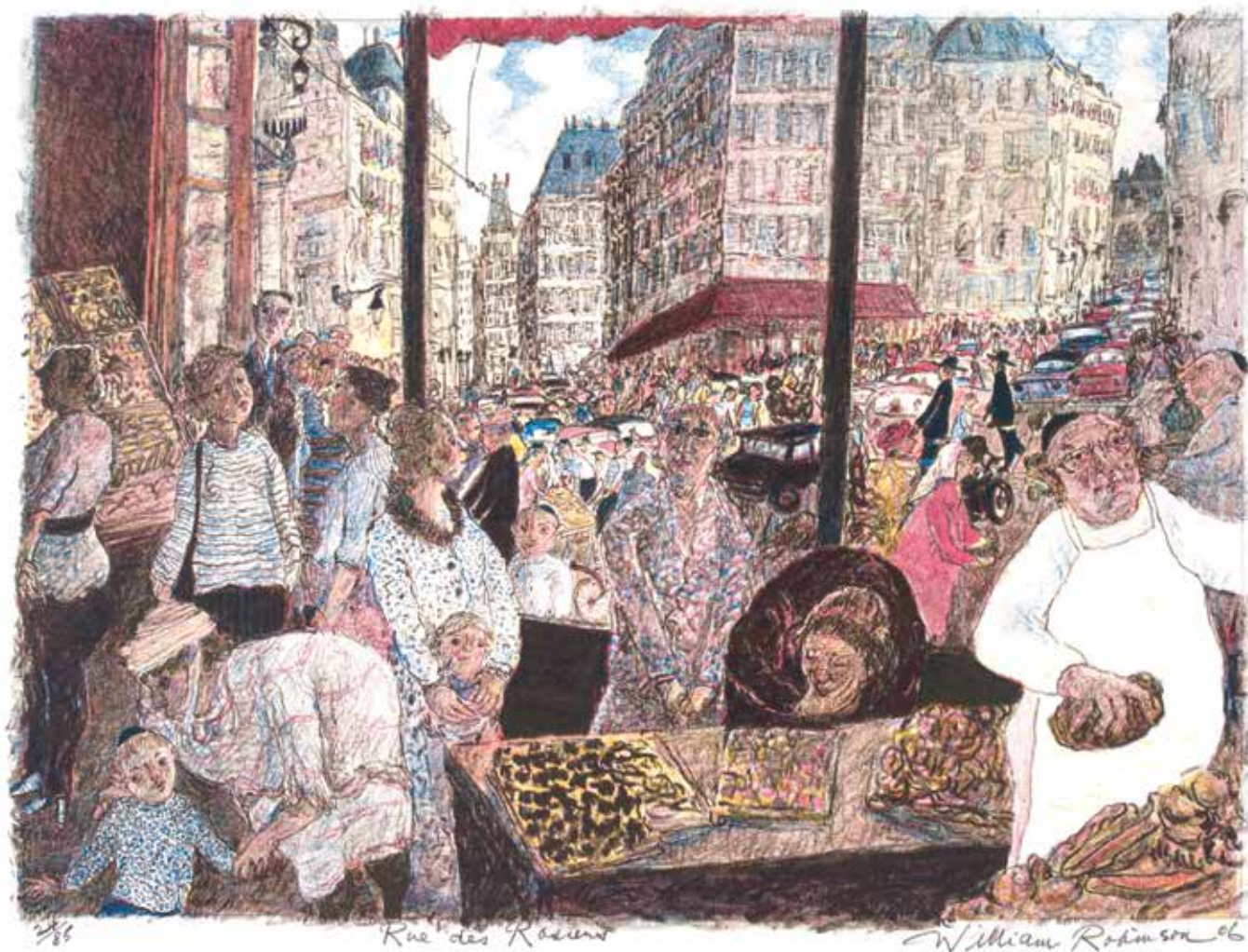
Robinson gained national prominence in the late 1980s and 1990s when he became the two-time winner of Australia's biggest portraiture prize, the Archibald, as well as of the Wynne Prize for landscape. Represented in the collections of all Australian national and state institutions, and celebrated in 2001 with a major survey exhibition at the Queensland Art Gallery that later travelled to the National Gallery of Australia, Robinson has accomplished great institutional success. In 2007, the artist was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia for his service to the visual arts. In 2009, QUT opened the William Robinson Gallery, dedicated to the permanent display of the artist's work, and two years later it presented *William Robinson: The transfigured landscape*, the most comprehensive exhibition and publication on the artist's work to date.

Thus, it is quite easy to measure William Robinson's career in terms of his institutional achievements; however, it is also important to acknowledge that these achievements are mirrored by his broader success, which is due to his loyal supporters. Robinson's striking compositions appeal to a diverse audience—the general public, fellow artists, his former students, prominent authors such as David Malouf, and distinguished curators such as the late Betty Churcher, as well as The Honourable Quentin Bryce AD CVO, who professes that his paintings “bring joy, reassurance, beauty and inspiration” to her life.¹

As epitomised by Quentin Bryce's statement, Robinson's supporters truly *love* his work. This is reflected in the large number of works held in private collections throughout Australia and internationally. Robinson's work reflects his life—the places he's lived, his family, his pets, his home—and this speaks volumes to audiences here and abroad. In fact, he is one of the few Australian artists whose work has been collected by the Vatican Museum in Vatican City and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Robinson's paintings speak to everyday experiences—joy, sorrow, frustration, humour. They somehow manage to inspire awe and express humility simultaneously.

Given the universal quality of Robinson's works, we are delighted to have the opportunity to share them with the world, as *William Robinson: Genesis* will travel to Europe and North America in 2017 and 2018. Importantly, the artist's extensive lithography series, which he created over several trips to Atelier Bordas in Paris, will return to the city from which they originated. QUT is fortunate to have Robinson's entire lithography series in its collection, which the artist has generously donated over the years. With over 170 of Robinson's works, including paintings, drawings, prints and sculpture, QUT has the largest institutional collection of the artist's work. We are very excited indeed to share highlights from the QUT Art Collection, along with a select few works from private collections, in this exhibition. From Robinson's celebrated oil paintings to his masterfully created lithographs, etchings, drawings and watercolours, *William Robinson: Genesis* is a brilliant opportunity to appreciate this artist's distinguished oeuvre.

Rue des Rosiers 2006
lithograph 38.5 x 68.5cm
OUT Art Collection
Gift of the artist under the
Cultural Gifts Program, 2008



Pont des Arts 2006
lithograph 38.5 x 68.5cm
QUT Art Collection
Gift of the artist under the
Cultural Gifts Program, 2008



Farm II 1984
pencil 56 x 76cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Untitled (Man walking a dog) 1979
etching and aquatint 40 x 40cm
QUT Art Collection
Gift of the artist, 1979



William Robinson

2/6

WILLIAM ROBINSON _____ Genesis

Vanessa Van Ooyen
Senior Curator
William Robinson Gallery and QUT Art Museum

To celebrate the occasion of esteemed Australian artist William Robinson's 80th birthday, a high tea was held at Brisbane's Old Government House (1862), the Queensland colony's first public building and home of the artist's eponymous gallery since 2009. At the event, an enthralled audience listened avidly as Robinson reminisced about his school days at Junction Park Primary School. He recalled how, as a seven-year-old boy, he would often be requested by his schoolmates to draw for them during play break. Being a resourceful young lad, he found materials readily available and abundant in the wartime school grounds—namely, sticks and dirt. To the delight of his fellow students, he would draw images of horses over and over again—the baker's, milkman's and garbage man's horses—familiar creatures that he would see every morning as they completed their daily rounds. Robinson had further opportunities to study his equine subjects, since a vacant block on the same road of his home in the inner-Brisbane suburb of Fairfield was the grazing paddock for the baker's horses after their day of toil. Some 70 years on, Robinson drily observed that he had been chosen by his classmates to draw as “this was one of his only talents”.¹

Drawing is a visible trace of our cognitive processes, a record of how we perceive, understand and process experiences, not just with our brains but also with our fine and gross motor skills; it represents the synergy of mind and body. Just as in the book of Genesis, where God's actions created the heavens and the earth, so too can drawing be seen as a fundamental expression of creation. *William Robinson: Genesis* reveals the connections between the artist's more well-known paintings and their preliminary drawings and other works on paper. The exhibition illustrates how, over time, these often overlooked mediums have contributed

significantly to Robinson creating a pure, singular style that has seen him become one of Australia's greatest living artists.

Robinson is a consummate draftsman, and at times his simple drawings and preliminary sketches belie the complexity found in his large-scale paintings. However, works on paper have been fundamental to his practice, and like so many artists before him, they have provided him with a means of experimentation and a way to challenge established artistic conventions. The origin of Robinson's artistic vision lies in capturing a sensation in and of an experience or observation. As he explains, “I work not directly from the drawings, but rather from what the drawings provided me with for my visual memory.”² His goal, then, is to capture a fleeting moment and conjure a thought through the act of making a mark, and to later translate this in his studio.

Although he had sustained an art practice since the 1960s, it was not until 1970 when the family moved to a property at Birkdale on the outskirts of Brisbane that Robinson began producing work in earnest and achieved greater public exposure. In 1979, Robinson (then aged 43) had a major stylistic breakthrough in the *conté* ‘cow’ drawings. As he states, prior to this, he “had gone up other pathways that were all wrong because they were other artists’ pathways”.³ Taking their lead from early daguerreotypes, works such as *Three cows* 1979 were a radical stylistic departure from the artist's earlier colourist paintings that were heavily influenced by French artist Pierre Bonnard. While the *conté* cow drawings employ limited colour, there remains a shared conceptual ground with prior and subsequent works. Light is central to Robinson's artistic explorations and in these works we see the artist exploit the paper's crisp and marked whiteness to create shafts of light

Three cows 1979
conté 92 x 65cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Feeding the birds 1977-78
etching 40 x 30cm
QUT Art Collection
Purchased 2003



6/6

William Robinson

Goats and chooks 1980
oil on linen 91 x 76cm
OUT Art Collection
Purchased 2009 through the William
Robinson Art Collection Fund and
partial donation by Philip Bacon

through the solid black of the oval frames. Rather than using graphite pencil, Robinson chose *conté*, “as it achieved a darker opacity”, key to capturing the tone of early black-and-white photography and its processes of exposure and light.⁴ The reverse effect occurs in etchings of the same period, *Feeding the birds* 1979 and *Untitled (Man walking the dog)* 1979, where darkness and light are inverted, and figures become the shadow or negative space of ink on paper. Viewing them, one can recall not only early photographic processes, but also the opening lines of the book of Genesis when God separated the light from the darkness as the fundamental act of creation.

The restraint and simplicity in these early works are carried through to drawings of the early 1980s, such as *Chooks* and *Chookyard 3* and *4* 1982. In these delicate graphite drawings, we can appreciate Robinson’s ability to capture the emotions of farmyard fowl in a stream of visual consciousness. The results are not unlike the single line sketches of Pablo Picasso, and indeed Robinson could be seen in the lineage of the prodigious Spanish figure, who also had a great aptitude for drawing from an early age. In fact, one cannot look at Robinson’s numerous cow drawings without recalling Picasso’s interests in the bull or indeed the horse, with whom Robinson uncannily shares an affinity, having won the prestigious Archibald Prize for Portraiture with *Equestrian self portrait* in 1987. He is one of the very few artists to win the country’s longest-running award with a self portrait.

Robinson had an avid and growing following from the late 1970s when he held his first farmyard exhibition with Ray Hughes Gallery in 1978. Winning the Archibald Prize brought him greater recognition, however, unfortunately, this attention was somewhat muddled by critics and the media misreading the painting as the bucolic imaginings of a naïve painter.

The farmyard works are preliminary in the development of Robinson’s signature use of multi-perspective that is fully realised in his landscapes. In the 1980 painting *Goats and chooks*, one can clearly see the artist’s unique approach through the outwardly discordant arrangement of goats and chooks, with no single focal point taking priority over another. Consequently, there is a flattening of the picture plane but compositional complexity is maintained as vignettes play out across the canvas.

In 1984, Robinson moved from his semi-rural acreage on the outskirts of Brisbane to Beechmont in the Darlington Range of South East Queensland. The region is unlike any other in Australia, a space where mountain and sea are connected, woven together by ancient rainforest and tumbling hills and valleys. The vista at Beechmont offers no far horizon or distant point as reference. It is not a flat landscape, as is so often the assumption of Australia, “the land of sweeping plains”.⁵ Rather, in the hinterland of William Robinson, there is no divide between sea, mountain or sky but, rather, possibilities of a revolving, spherical and interconnected world. One cannot help but think of the Möbius strip, something without orientation nor distinction between inside and out. Drawings such as the studies for *Landscape with night and day* 1989 are exemplary of Robinson’s evolving approach, seeking a constant movement of light and form to interweave temporal and spatial elements, and to convey the interdependent relationship between what would otherwise be the definitive states of night *or* day.

Robinson is unlike other landscape artists of his generation and generations before who primarily concerned themselves with capturing the vastness of the continent, depicted as a never-ending vista made of horizontal and vertical planes—the immense desert skyline contrasted against the upright arboreal coastal bushland. This approach is often tied to the desire to forge a national identity



Landscape 42 1989
watercolour 56 x 76cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Landscape 43 1989
watercolour 56 x 76cm
Private collection, Brisbane



and it unwittingly reinforced a European perspective of dislocation from the land. Conversely, Robinson experienced a sort of transformative experience in his landscape:

The sea from Springbrook in the morning emerges as a golden light revealing the abstracted shadows of clouds in the sunlight. The landscape is 3000 feet above sea level and is a delicate self-sustaining rainforest. To walk through this rainforest in early morning and look at emerging light is a bewitching experience. The Australian landscape is often thought of as sparse, harsh and hot, but this rather commonly accepted way of presentation is not representation of the whole of Australia, and certainly not of Springbrook, or for that matter much of the eastern coast.⁶

Cows in the grass and *Cows in the trees* (both 1984) reveal Robinson's explorations in dealing with the undulating terrain of his Beechmont property. In these works, cows are dispossessed of certain limbs as one's vision is cut off by hills or trees. The constant movement characteristic of this environment is reflected in the orchestral quality of the farm drawings, which documented Robinson coming to terms with his new surrounds. The Australian landscape wields a powerful physical and emotional force, as one of our nation's brilliant contemporary writers, Tim Winton notes: "No matter how we live and what we think of ourselves, the sublimated facts of our physical situation are ever present, and as moving water grinds stones into fresh and unlikely shapes, the land presses in, forever wearing, pushing, honing."⁷

There is a steady development in Robinson's practice through the 1980s, as the landscape and his responses within it are played out in diagrammatic inventiveness. Experimenting with the delicacy and spontaneity of watercolour in *Landscape 3* 1986, the artist's growing awareness and mastery of capturing atmospheric changes in his milieu become evident. Indeed, this medium has been embraced by artists throughout history for just this adeptness in achieving clarity of mood and light. Reminiscent of early-20th-

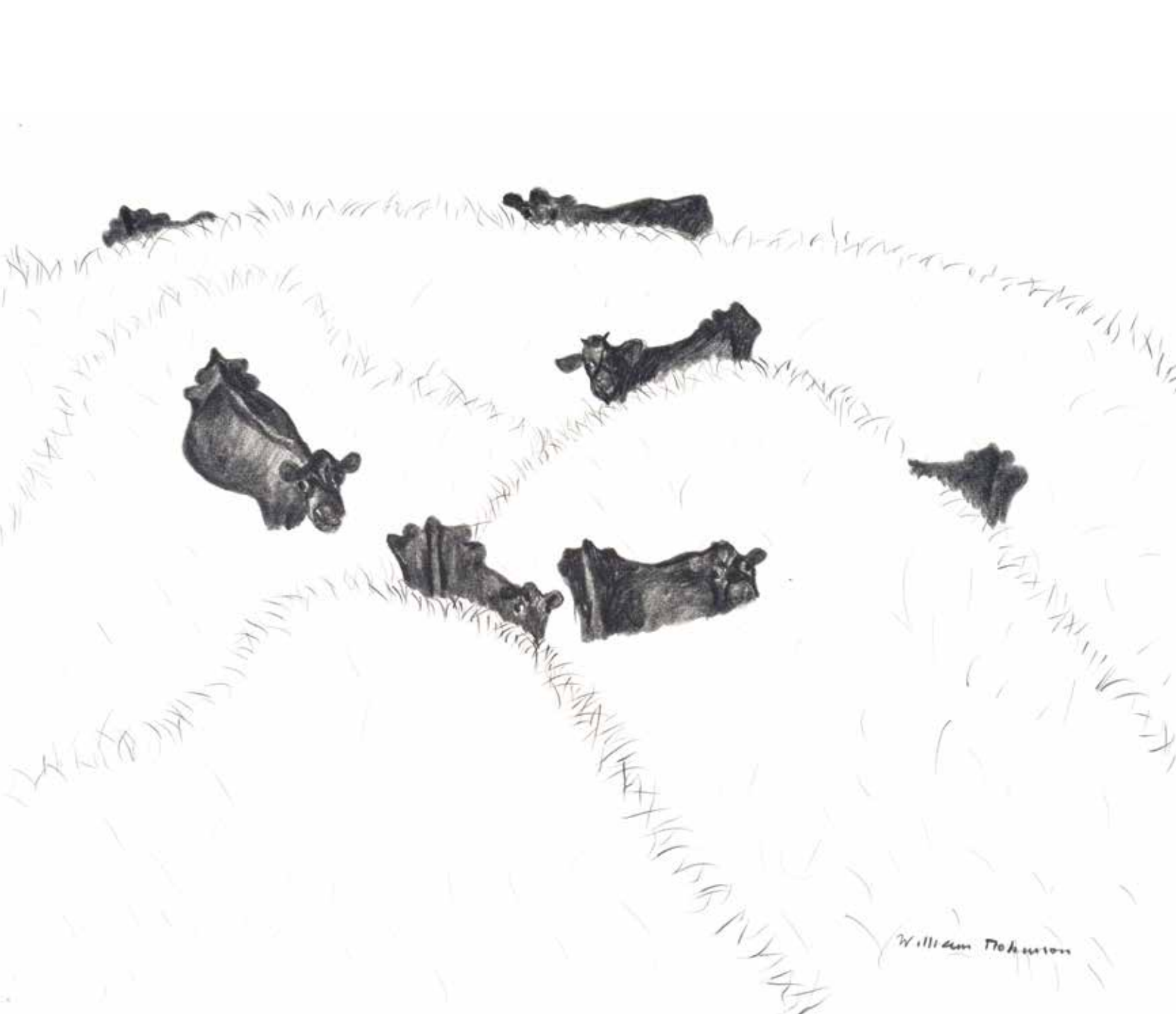
century spiritualist paintings, *Landscape 42* and *43* 1989 have a magical quality, as the subject is reconnoitred as modulations of colour and form rather than being fully articulated. It is here that Robinson is at his height of lyrical abstraction. Observing the enchanting qualities of these works, it is difficult to comprehend why Robinson feels that one of his biggest weaknesses lies in the medium:

It's always a struggle for me to do watercolour painting. I've never felt myself competent in it; I work them past the extent they should be worked. Pastels are very hard to overwork. The fabric of the material, the dust can take many, many layers because, again, you're not showing (except in some cases) the colour of the paper.⁸

Despite the artist's misgivings, watercolour painting has enabled Robinson flexibility to investigate his métier, and solve some of the pictorial questions his work generates. The mutability of the medium has allowed a more subconscious rendering of his work, the melding of feeling and sensation, or the internal and external, inside and outside the body.

Robinson's command of pastel as a medium is exceptional. In *Gum forest with pale-headed rosellas* 2001, he conveys extremes of the landscape, with twisting and turning tree branches sprouting out from corners, bottom and top of the paper. A pulsating light appears as one looks up through the canopy of trees while simultaneously looking outward toward the sea beyond. The two pale-headed rosellas serve to emphasise the fragility of this symbiotic union of sky, earth and sea.

In another of Robinson's large-scale pastels, *Evening light, Springbrook* 2005, one can see the artist's touch on paper is as painterly as that on canvas. This work is grounded in the desire to capture a sensation, a feeling of *being in* the landscape. Wrapped in hues of blue and purple, foliage floats and swirls about, captivating



Evening light, Springbrook 2005
coloured pastels 69.5 x 152cm
QUT Art Collection
Purchased 2009 through the William
Robinson Art Collection Fund

the viewer as if caught in a magical embrace of some omnipresent ancient power. The extraordinary scale of this work is clearly the outcome of Robinson's natural curiosity with not only the subject matter but medium as well. The artist comments:

I love pastels, I find them very satisfying. Like gouache, they can be worked at and left and you can come back [to them]. But if you leave your painting, you're leaving your palette and it gets dried lumps and the paint forms a skin and you don't want to apply that to the painting itself, so it's an engineering problem. I've always been able to work pastels and reach a certain stage where I feel satisfied, but in paint I'm never satisfied.⁹

The abiding spirituality in Robinson's practice is in some part due to his Christianity (he is a practicing Catholic), but more so due to his deep connection to the landscape and understanding of it as a set of principles rather than something to be idealised. Nowhere is Robinson's painterly and philosophical treatise more evident than in his greatest artistic accomplishments, the 'Creation' series paintings (1988–2004). Studies from the artist's sketchbooks for the last work, *Creation landscape: The dome of space and time* 2003/04, illustrate Robinson's measured approach to painting and how preliminary watercolours, sketches and notes provide seeds and ground for his ideas. In this canonic series of seven multi-panel paintings, Robinson addresses the narrative of creation as told in the book of Genesis. It is here that we see his ingenious use of multi-viewpoint and multi-time composition in the fullness of its complexity, as he captures the landscape through the simultaneous depiction of both space and time. Robinson takes us on a journey from panel to panel, from left to right, as the dome-shaped sky or spheres of light resemble celestial nebulae—depicting sunrise, daylight and sunset. These illuminate the double helix-shaped Springbrook panorama, which encompasses the Nerang River, Tallanbana and Mount Warning. Robinson portrays the mountainous rainforest in great detail, while also conveying impressions of sky, sea and time passing.



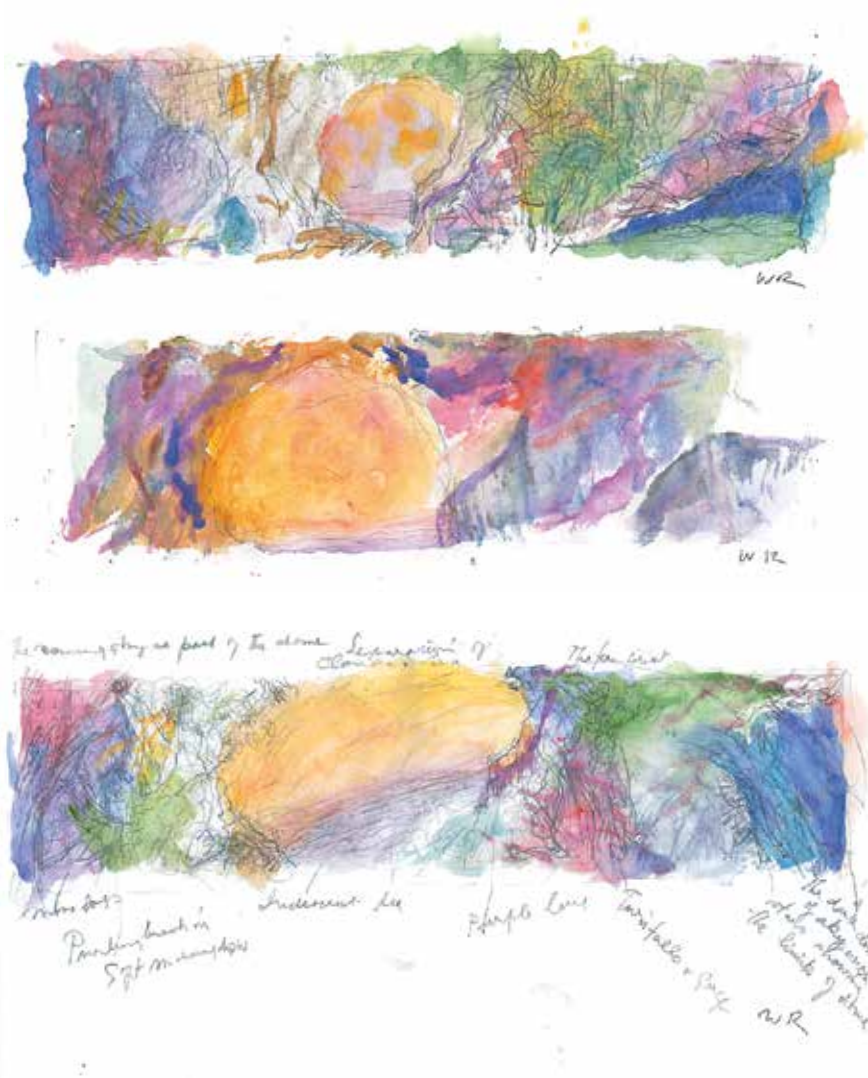


Study for Creation landscape: The dome of space and time (from the artist's sketchbook) 2003

watercolour and pencil

19 x 50cm approx (lying open + flat)

Private collection, Brisbane



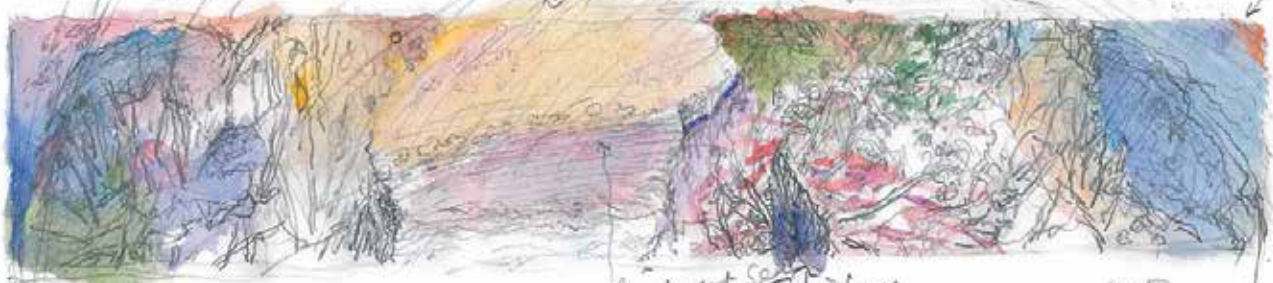
the landscape at this extreme shows
the distance & the covering dome
↓
the fainting gradually
changes colour (even disappearing.)

the clouds form the feeling
of the dome

the forest with
squares

looking into
extreme distance
and blue

deep blue - forest
and mountains



The Dome and The Separation

Gradient Separation
Thornfalls

W.B.
14.7.03

In Genesis the Dome of Heaven separates the sea from
the clouds. A metaphor for the separate forming of the earth
from the cosmos. A feeling of moving clouds, the relationships
of this

Artist painting *Creation landscape: The dome of space and time*
2003/04, Manly





Looking at the watercolour studies for the 'Creation' series, it is possible to see some of Robinson's process:

I do some sketches in the first place, like *The dome of space and time*, it came to me as an idea with the golden dome of heaven which was at the end of setting of all things in place—the heavens, earth ... and the picture went off to the left and to the right with the golden dome in the centre. Moving to New South Wales with the great volcano on that side, what did I do? I did a number of watercolours, but what I would call very loosely done. Then I would've done two or three of them and launched into the painting. The other side looking out from Springbrook towards the sea, and then what was behind me would fall back down into another dark valley, looking down to Mt Warning. On the left hand side looking north with that mountain, with the falls, which is not accurate of the falls because it doesn't occur in that way ... and then secret things came later like the robin and the parrots.¹⁰

This work is testament to Robinson's astute intellect, the centrality of his imagination, and his perception of the world as a complex and multifaceted life force. *Creation landscape: The dome of space and time* reveals a life within the picture while retaining a sense of the numinous quality of our natural world. Robinson's abiding deep interest in the broader metaphysical concerns of life has driven his whole practice. Whether through symbolism, historical references, colour theory or composition, he is always probing and contesting both his and viewers' assumptions.

His ability to construct a surface that unfolds in a fluid, uninterrupted discursive flow, stretching undiluted to the canvas edge, such as in *Creation landscape: Dome of space and time* is unparalleled. This perspective includes sensory and emotional content, almost a combination of artistic and scientific enquiry that reaches to the metaphysical.

Robinson's art provides a sensation of being in the landscape but it is also about the intensity of the artist's internal vision. While







Creation landscape: The dome of space and time 2003/04
oil on linen, triptych 152 x 640.5cm
QUT Art Collection
Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural
Gifts Program by William Robinson, 2014



Landscape with three waterfalls 1997
gouache, coloured pastels and pencil 25 x 35cm
QUT Art Collection
Donated through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program by Sarah Elliott in memory
of Dr Peter Elliott, 2015

the genesis of much of his work comes from an initial scribble, he often relies on descriptive words to conjure previous feelings or observations. His painting method is unconventional—a rough graphite or oil stick sketch is made on the canvas and then he works systematically from bottom corner to top corner using small ‘daub’ brush strokes. In effect, these skipping brushstrokes allow ground to show through, creating a diaphanous quality that would otherwise be lost in solid paint. This approach is not unlike his early *conté* cow drawings, where he utilised the untouched white of the paper as light effect. Of his painting process, he says:

...often I will define the sky, which I believe can set the mood for the painting. At this stage I work not directly from the drawings, but rather from what the drawings provided me with for my visual memory. One section of a work is worked fully, but not necessarily completed and I work from there across the surface of the painting ... often I will see a need to establish another relationship not joined to the part already worked on ... Colours and enclosed forms are also considered all the time to make sure of the wholeness of the work.¹¹

Much like Robinson's unique painting technique, lithography commands the artist to consider positive and negative when making the initial drawing on stone. Robinson makes the most of the whiteness of the paper, and his lithographs radiate a soft, pearly light. He explains,

The paper is absolutely crucial because it becomes an integral part of the lithograph itself, even though it seems like just white paper showing through. When you look at a lithograph, it looks like a [Georges] Seurat painting.¹²

In his five campaigns at Atelier Bordas, Paris, between 1995 and 2006, Robinson produced a handful of lithographs that depicted daily Parisian life. However, during his early visits he relied on drawings from major paintings such as *Blue pools*, *Springbrook to Beechmont* 2000 and the *Sea with morning sun from Springbrook* 1996.

While based on existing paintings, the lithographs are works in their own right, in as much as the scale may suggest, but also in demonstrating Robinson's mastery in mark-making and as a colourist. In some ways, the lithographic discipline suits Robinson with his intuitive grasp of positive and negative space, light and darkness, as ultimately it requires compiling gestural marks while maintaining a consciousness of working with an image in reverse. This is something that Robinson is clearly adept in, considering his lengthy investigations into multiform pictorial devices explored in preliminary drawings—for example, a watercolour such as *Springbrook to the sea* 1997. Robinson is always concerned with the making of pictures and not merely the illustration of a view. He has an elaborate process of reworking ideas in a number of mediums.

By the time of his last studio visits to Atelier Bordas, Robinson felt that he had mastered the technical aspects of lithography enough to confidently explore subjects in his immediate surrounds, and so he began to explore Parisian street life. Not unlike his earlier farmyard drawings and paintings, there is a liveliness and comedic energy in his capturing of the individual characteristics of his subjects. Another similarity to his farmyard pictures is that we often see the figures of the artist and his wife Shirley hidden among these depictions of the chaos of daily life.

Clearly, William Robinson's art is about places and experiences that are deeply personal to him. While the lithographic practice that began in 1990 under the tutelage of Neil Leveson at the Victorian Print workshop led Robinson to follow in the lineage of great masters such as Picasso and Henri Matisse, he always stayed grounded in his connection with locale—the landscape that provided the conceptual framework for his practice. In Paris, despite being caught in an atmosphere heavy with the presence of the early modernists who came before him—he used the same lithographic stones used by 20th-century greats—he



remained steadfast to his own vision. It is no surprise to hear that Robinson's visit to Chartres Cathedral provoked a particularly powerful response that he would later draw upon to describe the experience of being among the ancient Antarctic beech trees of the Springbrook plateau. For Robinson, Chartres "leads you past visual experience to a profoundly spiritual journey: the sense of silence and spirituality is felt in the darkness".¹³ Robinson perfectly captures this in the lithograph *Chartres* 2006, where the towering gothic arches and stained-glass windows embody the original separation of darkness and light.

While Robinson moves between technique and medium, using drawing, printmaking, pastel, watercolours and painting, he has an all-encompassing vision. As with the technical aspects of Robinson's practice, there is no single linear view and everything is interconnected and circular. Viewing major paintings alongside the often diminutive works on paper affords one a rare insight into both the technical and conceptual underpinning of Robinson's oeuvre. Who would have predicted that some 70 years on, the young boy drawing horses on the ground would emerge as an artist producing the most memorable landscape paintings of a generation and, with the fullness of time, possibly the nation's greatest paintings.

¹ William Robinson and Quentin Bryce in conversation, 17 April 2016.

² Lou Klepac, *William Robinson: Paintings 1987–2000* (Sydney: The Beagle Press, 2001), 186.

³ Deborah Hart, "William Robinson's artistic development: An intimate and expansive journey," in *William Robinson: The transfigured landscape* (Brisbane and Sydney: Queensland University of Technology and Piper Press, 2011), 23.

⁴ William Robinson, personal communication with the author, 20 April 2016.

⁵ Dorothea MacKellar, "My Country" (poem), 1908.

⁶ Klepac, *William Robinson*, 130.

⁷ Tim Winton, *Island Home* (Melbourne: Penguin Books, 2015), 25.

⁸ William Robinson, personal communication with the author, 20 April 2016.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Klepac, *William Robinson*, 186.

¹² William Robinson, personal communication with the author, 20 April 2016.

¹³ Klepac, *William Robinson*, 26.



Blue pools 2000
lithograph 78 x 94cm
OUT Art Collection
Gift of the artist under the Cultural
Gifts Program, 2002



The blue pools, Springbrook to Beechmont 2000
oil on linen 206.5 x 263cm
QUT Art Collection
Purchased through the William Robinson Art
Collection Fund, 2013



Three leaping cows 1980
pencil 56 x 76cm
Private collection, Brisbane



BELOW

Detail of *Studies for landscape with night and day* 1989
watercolour and pencil 56 x 76cm
Private collection, Brisbane

RIGHT

Creation landscape: Darkness and light (Study) 1988
coloured pastels 69 x 77cm
QUT Art Collection
Purchased through the William Robinson Art Collection
Fund and partial donation by Philip Bacon, 2010





Chooks 1 1980
gouache 76 x 56cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Chooks 1982
pencil 76 x 56cm
Private collection, Brisbane



WILLIAM ROBINSON_____The Printmaker

Emeritus Professor Sasha Grishin AM, FAHA
Australian National University

[I]f the object is there at the moment he is working,
the artist is always in danger of allowing himself to be
distracted by the effects of direct and immediate vision,
and to lose the primary idea on the way.

—Pierre Bonnard¹

Although William Robinson is primarily known as a painter, his practice extends to many other mediums, including pastels, watercolours and gouaches, ceramics, bronze sculptures and printmaking. With over 150 printed editions, stretching over almost four decades, printmaking has not been an occasional flirtation for Robinson; he has become a serial offender. Also, unlike a number of other artists who employ printmaking as a way of breeding less expensive ‘copies’ of their paintings, Robinson employs different printmaking mediums to revisit and explore new themes in his art in ways that are different from what can be achieved in other mediums, such as oil painting, pastel drawing or watercolour or gouache painting. His etchings and lithographs present very focused and distilled comments on the questions that he has tackled throughout his art.

Robinson is not a *plein air* artist, one who works directly from the object or the scene in front of them. Rather, like Pierre Bonnard—an artist who served as a model in Robinson’s early development—he works from memory, from an idea, which he then explores in his artwork. Also like Bonnard, he ascribes to the philosophy that an artist should work with a ‘backyard mentality’; in other words, they should only paint that with which they are intimately familiar. In the case of Bonnard, this may have been light-filled glowing interiors of his house in the south of France, with Marthe Boursin shown in various states of undress. With Robinson, it is the family chook yard, cows with dreamy eyes and cavorting goats; the various landscapes and beachscapes that have surrounded him; and the faces of those who are intimately familiar to him. These subjects are well known and deeply loved. As the artist’s circumstances changed—he moved from suburban Brisbane to a small farm at Birkdale; later to the Beechmont Range in Queensland’s Gold Coast hinterland; followed by Kingscliff in northern New South Wales; and, more recently, back into suburban Brisbane—so the subjects in his art changed. Never one

to blindly and mimetically follow his model, Robinson is an artist who, with humour, beauty and faith, provides us with testimony to that which he has witnessed.

Painting for Robinson is a solitary activity, which generally follows a daily routine. Frequently, there is a morning walk, followed by about an hour of playing the piano—a strategy through which he attains a state of grace that disentangles the conscious mind from the painting task at hand—and then the painting process itself commences. Once the day’s painting is completed, the artist once again plays the piano to come back to earth. After this, the artist’s lifelong companion, his wife Shirley, may be invited to comment on the painting and in this way consummate its existence, but Robinson’s studio process is something that is essentially done alone. In his printmaking, not only is the outcome largely different from his painting, but so too is the process. For Robinson, printmaking is a collaborative, collective experience, where the artist is part of a team that engages with the creative and technical process. Whether it is lithography or intaglio printmaking, the technical process involves a distancing of the artist from the finished artwork, a collaborative intervention that invariably impacts the resolution of the work.

In printmaking there are two well-established traditions. The first involves the artist printmaker who does virtually everything in the making of the print. This includes working on the matrix until it is ready for printing, inking and printing the work, and finally editioning and signing the completed print. Amongst printmakers this is sometimes termed the fully autograph original print. The second tradition, which is particularly well established in Europe and the United States, involves the use of a master printer. The degree of the artist’s involvement in the process varies from artist to artist. Some simply provide a sketch that the printer will realise through the selected printmaking technology, finally to

be approved and signed by the artist at the end of the process. Others adopt an intensely hands-on style of participation, where the artist is present at every stage of the process and personally making all of the critical decisions. For example, Pablo Picasso famously reoriented the whole process of modern lithography in the atelier of Fernand Mourlot on the Rue de Chabrol in Paris, in 15 days between December 1945 and January 1946, when he created his famous *Bull* lithograph in 11 states, each time coming to the atelier and placing his personal stamp on each moment in the development of the image as he personally redrew the image 11 times on the stone.²

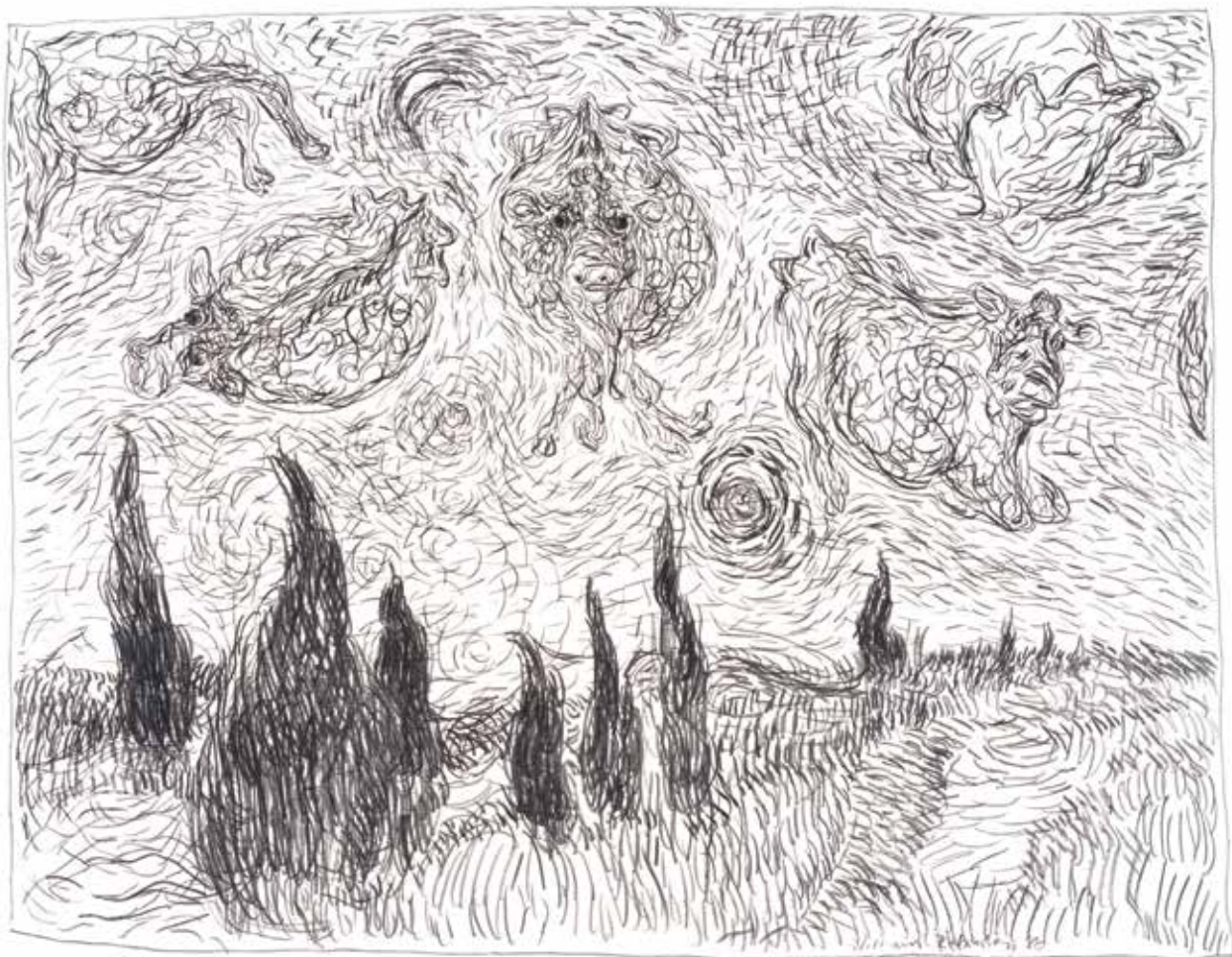
Although Robinson employs master printers for most of his editioned prints, like Picasso, he is present in the atelier and guides the process through every stage of its development. He works as an insider, as a very knowledgeable artist printmaker, who draws on the expertise of experienced technicians to create the prints as he has envisaged them, although the final outcome is determined through the collaborative process. He determines what he wants to say in his prints and then painstakingly works on the matrix to achieve precisely the effects and interpretation that he desires.

When Robinson was studying at the Central Technical College in Brisbane in the 1950s, printmaking was not on the syllabus.³ It was a quite conservative college, teaching a regimented skills-based syllabus that included geometric drawing and perspectival drawing. Robinson had accumulated a range of technical skills at college, but was not cloned to a particular style or orientation. He was, as he would later describe himself, a “clean skin”⁴ when he graduated, and sought out, for inspiration, fellow travellers, including Odilon Redon, Paul Klee and Pierre Bonnard.

In the early 1970s, he moved to a three-hectare farm at Birkdale on the outskirts of Brisbane, with Shirley and their six children,

and commenced teaching at the Kelvin Grove Teachers’ College, where Betty Churcher was a friend and colleague. By this time, Robinson had increasingly started to focus more intensely on his own art and in 1971 he travelled to Sydney to see the Bonnard exhibition, which confirmed in his mind the centrality of this artist to his own practice.⁵ It was in 1972 that Robinson had his first experience of printmaking. Churcher invited her friend, the artist Murray Walker, to run a workshop on etching for the students at the college, and Robinson joined in. The resulting prints are lively, heavily worked drypoints and include a *Nude with towel* and a small untitled print of a chook pecking the ground, where the stronger, dark horizontal lines articulating the hen are contrasted with the light, rhythmic lines of the surrounding swaying grasses. Walker was a good teacher and generous in sharing various technical recipes and was encouraging to Robinson, and the pair swapped paintings. In retrospect, these early prints appear as somewhat rough and juvenile, even though Robinson was 36 years old at the time, but they were saying something quite different from that which was being said in his drawings and paintings. From the outset, Robinson was not drawn to printmaking as a reproductive art form; instead, he saw it as an alternative medium through which to create an artwork that was unattainable in painting or drawing.

Robinson’s printmaking in the 1970s was erratic and restricted to intaglio techniques—etchings, drypoints and aquatint—and they were small in scale and sometimes printed and editioned at a considerably later date. Shirley’s careful cataloguing of Robinson’s images indicates that he produced at least 19 prints between 1972 and 1977, with the largest edition numbering six.⁶ Many of the subjects of these early prints reflected the reality of the classroom in college, with posed nude models from life drawing classes. There were also some genre scenes, with the most memorable being a small, untitled etching of a couple seated on a park bench



feeding birds.⁷ The two figures are lit from the rear, as was frequently the case in Bonnard's art, and they appear silhouetted against a light background. One figure is surrounded by birds; the other figure is sitting on the end of the bench and is turned in the opposite direction. It is a small topical suburban vignette, charming and open to humorous interpretation.

In the late 1970s, farmyard scenes with chooks, ducks and goats started to dominate both Robinson's paintings and his intaglio prints. By this time, the family had been living on their Birkdale farm for almost a decade and the artist, having come from suburban Coorparoo in Brisbane, had become gradually aware that all farm animals have individual characters and identities. He observed, "Bonnard was a great teacher of making do with one's house and backyard as a subject"⁸ and here a subject appeared as readymade. In his art, the animals are anthropomorphised and treated with humour, but retain their sense of dignity. Like Bonnard, Robinson spent a lifetime closely observing animals—dogs and cats, as well as farm animals. For Bonnard, farm animals were part of his life at Le Clos,⁹ as they were for Robinson at Birkdale, and both artists treated them with affectionate amusement. Although one is tempted to view in Robinson's farmyard etchings a parallel with Aesop's fables—a commentary on human behaviour—the parallel is never literal and viewers are invited to draw their own conclusions. On occasion, Robinson employs his farm animal collaborators to comment on, or parody, developments in art, with references to Vincent van Gogh, Marcel Duchamp, and Christo,¹⁰ but on most occasions the humour is quite innocent and obvious. These etchings, most of which have not been exhibited, are generally untitled and are known by later descriptive titles recorded by the artist's wife.

Whereas the paintings explored compositional complexities, the etchings could be described as psychologically convincing

character studies of the depicted creatures. The striking aquatint *Roosters* 1978/80 is a study of two roosters puffed up with pride and opening the potential for conflict, while the etching *Ducks landing* 1978/80 is a beautifully choreographed composition of three graceful ducks involved in a complex bird ballet. If, for Bonnard, there would be no art without nature but art was not to be confused with nature, for Robinson, art grows out of nature but frequently also comments on art. A number of these farmyard etchings were later beautifully editioned, from plates etched and proofed by Robinson, at Basil Hall Editions in Darwin; at Studio One in Canberra; and at the Victorian Print Workshop in Melbourne. One of the properties of etching that was most precious for Robinson was "that the metal was eaten away to give a three-dimensional effect, so that you could do a rooster and raise it above the surface in relief".¹¹ This was something that you could never achieve in drawing or painting.

A major development in Robinson's printmaking occurred in 1990 when his art dealer, Ray Hughes, introduced him to one of Australia's finest lithographers, Neil Leveson, the director of the Australian Print Workshop in Melbourne, and a fruitful collaboration commenced between the artist and the Workshop that lasted for more than three years.¹² Robinson had never previously worked with lithography and was immediately attracted by this painterly medium, where colours were layered one on top of the other and the integrity of the paper was respected, so that white areas were simply the paper shining through. He later reflected, "lithography is like Baroque music, where layering and ornament are both important ... you do make mistakes, but by 1992, I felt that I had made progress in designing lithographs and started to achieve a luminosity in the colours".¹³ Lithography also assists the artist with colour in painting; as Bonnard once noted, "I've learned a lot that applies to painting by doing colour lithography. When one has to study relations between tones by



Creation of Water and Land.

William Johnson

Study for Creation landscape: Earth and sea I-III (I) 1995
oil on linen 91 x 122cm
QUT Art Collection
Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural
Gifts Program by William Robinson, 2015



Study for Creation landscape: Earth and sea I-III (II) 1995
oil on linen 91 x 122cm
QUT Art Collection
Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural
Gifts Program by William Robinson, 2015



Study for Creation landscape: Earth and sea I-III (III) 1995
oil on linen 91 x 122cm
QUT Art Collection
Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural
Gifts Program by William Robinson, 2015



Study for Creation landscape: Earth and sea 1995
oil on linen, three panels each 91 x 122cm
QUT Art Collection
Donated through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program by William Robinson, 2015



playing with only four or five colours that one superimposes or juxtaposes, one discovers a great many things.”¹⁴

If in the 1970s and 1980s, etching appeared as a relatively minor brook that ran alongside Robinson’s major practice of painting, in the 1990s and 2000s, lithography emerged as a significant tributary in his art practice, feeding and cross-fertilising the mighty river of his painting. The tragic death of Leveson in March 1992, at the age of 44, disrupted Robinson’s collaboration with the Workshop. Although he started to work with other printers, the bond had formed and Robinson had been seduced for life by the beauty of lithography.

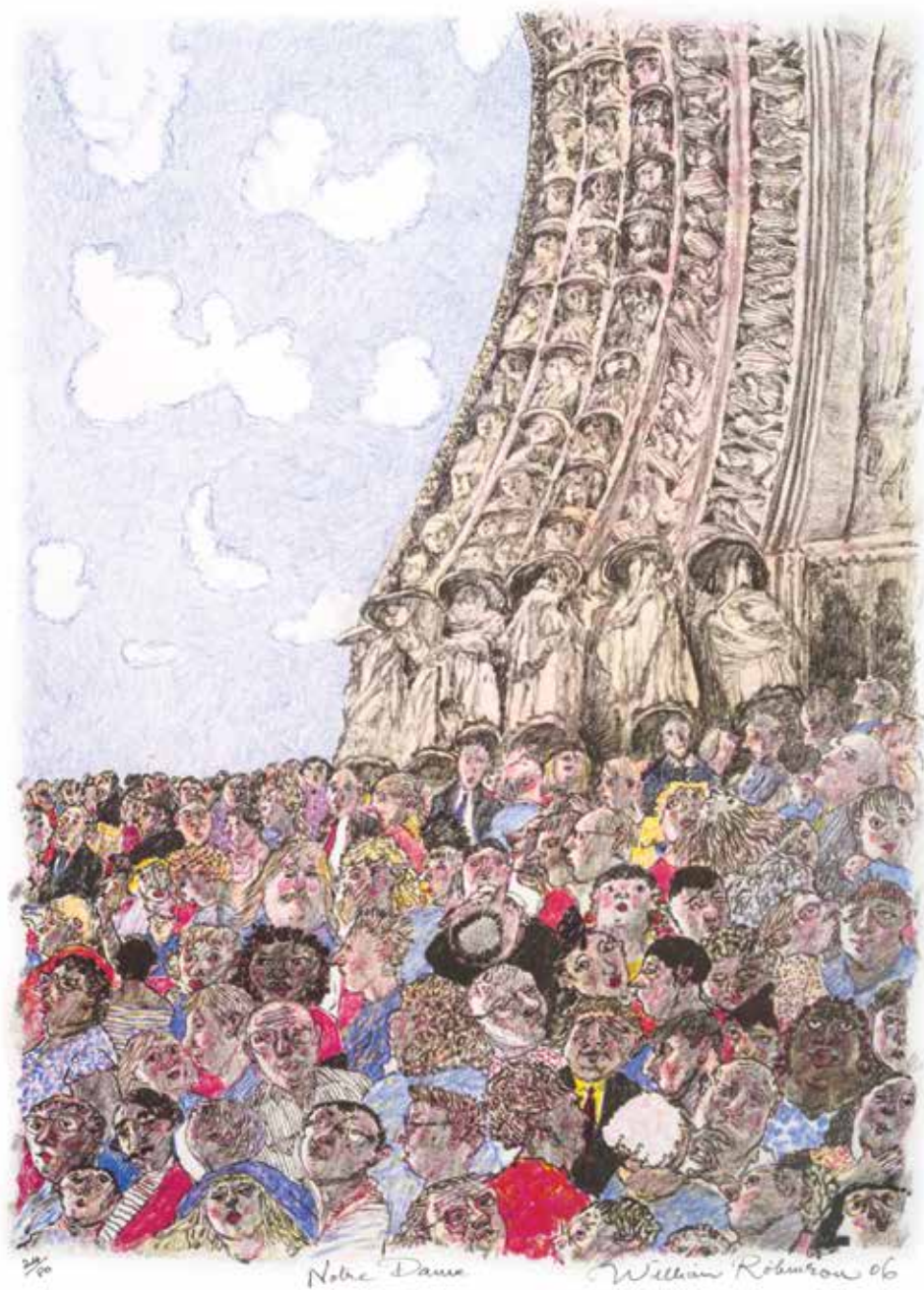
In terms of his professional career, at the time Robinson was discovering lithography, he was also attracting popular acclaim, even if not curatorial endorsement. He was awarded the Archibald Prize for portraiture in 1987 and again in 1995, and the Wynne Prize for landscape painting in 1990 and in 1996. His exhibitions were well received, both critically and by art collectors, and he was increasingly developing into a popular, rather than a fashionable, artist. The paintings, in their compositional structure and technique of execution, were growing increasingly ambitious, as he abandoned the horizon line or structured perspective and sought to create an all-enveloping landscape experience. His canvases of the early 1990s explore a mystical microcosm, which, at first glance, is disorientating to the viewer until it is allowed to engulf the beholder. The landscape is not something that is ahead of you, but something that is all around you—above, below and on all sides. His paintings and prints present a multi-view and a multi-temporal experience of the landscape, a space in which you can lose yourself and explore the individual facets.

The colour lithographs of the early 1990s, printed by Leveson, include the triptychs *Creation landscape: Man and the spheres I–III*

1991 and *Creation landscape: Water and land I–III* 1991, and were Robinson’s most ambitious prints to date. *Creation landscape: Man and the spheres I–III* was printed in colour from ten stones, in an edition of 45, with the image stretching across the three sheets to measure over two metres. Compared with the painting on the same subject,¹⁵ the composition, though related, is quite different. In the lithograph, we are witness to a jewel-like microcosm; the palette is lighter and we are drawn into an exploration of faint magical tracings of a universe coming into being. The lithograph becomes like a portable devotional icon in contrast to the painting that can be likened to an installed church altarpiece, creating and commanding its own sacred space.

Robinson’s lithography came to a glorious culmination at the Atelier Bordas in Paris. Franck Bordas, the grandson of the great lithographic printer Fernand Mourlot and the son of a lithographic printer, set up his own atelier at the age of 19 in 1978. For Robinson, coming to Atelier Bordas was coming to the very centre of art lithography, where the artisans lived and breathed lithography and where he could work in an expert and professional collective. Robinson would stay with Shirley in Paris for periods of between four and six weeks and would work at the atelier from morning to night, five days a week. He spent five campaigns in Paris in 1995, 1998, 2000, 2004 and 2006. At the atelier he would draw the composition onto the stone; Shirley would then assist in the transfer of the composition onto additional stones or plates for printing other colours; and Robinson would personally supervise every single stage of the production until the final edition was printed. In some instances, up to 12 colours would be employed, with each being separately printed on top of the earlier layers.

The subjects attempted were a combination of those that he had worked on earlier in other mediums, including the farmyard images, the landscapes and the self portraits, and those that he



Creation landscape: Earth and sea I 1995
watercolour 56 x 76cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Creation landscape: Earth and sea II 1995
watercolour 56 x 76cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Equestrian self portrait 1987
oil on linen 131 x 192cm
OUT Art Collection
Donated through the Australian
Government's Cultural Gifts Program
by William Robinson, 2011

had devised in France after having visited Paris several times over more than a decade, and which he largely attempted during his final campaign in 2006.

Reflecting on his developing notion of lithography in Paris, Robinson observed:

I am not turning a painting into a lithograph, perhaps turning some of the ideas in a painting into a lithograph. For example, I did a painting of *The blue pools*, then I did a lithograph of it [both in 2000], but it is a reinterpretation of it, not the same composition ... In lithography, you have to stand back and analyse how the colours will work ... you develop an intuition. It is a new and lively way of presenting the subject in lithography that painting does not have. I come with a subject in mind, but rethink colour ... when I use two colours in lithography it is more like a drawing, when I use up to 12 colours I think of it as a combination of pastel and gouache.¹⁶

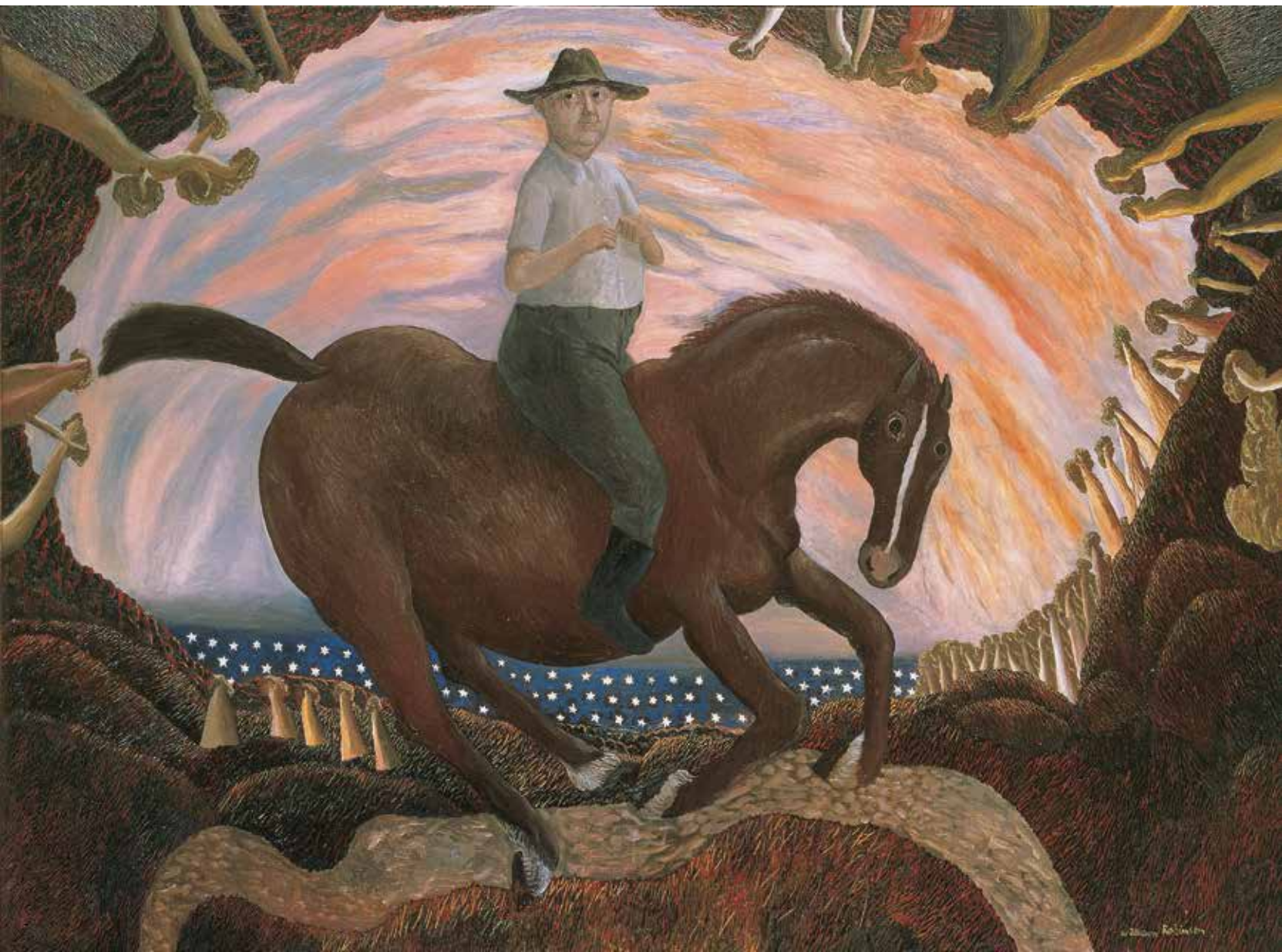
During his first two campaigns in Paris at the Atelier Bordas, in 1995 and 1998, Robinson produced landscape lithographs;¹⁷ in 2000, it was a mixture of Paris images and landscape compositions;¹⁸ in 2004, he made 30 editions of self portraits and related parodies; and on his final stay in 2006, 10 editions were printed dealing with French and, more specifically, Parisian subjects.

Self portraiture is a discrete sub-category in Robinson's oeuvre if one considers his so-called 'Archibald paintings', which he eloquently and on numerous occasions has described as his "Sunday paintings";¹⁹ however, the inclusion of images of himself, and more frequently himself and Shirley, has been a feature of his art since the 1970s, and in paintings of domestic interiors and in the farmyard pictures. A self portrait is both a witness to 'being there' as well as a ploy to involve the beholder as a participant within the picture space. Almost without exception, Robinson adopts a deliberate disguise in his self portraits, a mask that he

can hide behind and from which he can comment on society and its rituals and foibles. One of the most remarkable series of self portrait images is that of himself as a pug, a humorous comment on his situation as well as an attempt to give his features the resemblance of one of the number of dogs with whom he shared his life on the farm. The big oil painting featuring himself and his pugs, titled *Self portrait for town and country* 1990, was exhibited in 1992 in the Archibald exhibition, where it was the runner-up. In 1991, he made an etching, *Pug self portrait*,²⁰ as well as a hand-coloured lithograph with Neil Leveson with the same title as the Archibald painting.²¹ He revisited the theme in Paris as a large colour lithograph, *Self portrait for town and country* 2004.²² Although they are all related and explore the same idea, each work is unique. The primary conceit is the portrait of the sitter as his dog, with the secondary idea a contrast between the pin-suited gentleman sitting in a room in town and the image of self as a farmer in the small inset window, appearing heroic but somewhat impotent, with his shotgun limp and broken as the lord of the manor in a somewhat farcical situation. The Paris lithograph may revisit the same theme as that first conceived more than a decade earlier, but it is revisited from a new perspective and with a new sophistication, with the colour rethought, the composition tightened, and a new sense of psychological tension developed.

Reflecting on his self portraits, Robinson recently said,

I never try to reproduce what I see in front of me; that is too boring for me. So when I make images of myself, I am like an actor wearing masks. In portraits of myself, as in the old movies like Laurel and Hardy, sometimes Stanley looks out of the set and addresses the audience with his eyes. There are notions of fantasy, nostalgia, but not of sadness ... when showing myself as a pug, it is a comment on my situation. In the stunned mullet painting,²³ the reference was to Hogarth's *Shrimp girl*, where I painted myself in a Driza-Bone and referenced the fish slapping routine as in Monty Python, but with the expression of the shrimp girl. Myself with my brother John,²⁴ professor of mathematics, myself as with honorary degree in a ridiculous Chinese outfit in pyjamas...²⁵



Creation series: Earth and sea I-III (I) 1995
lithograph 48.5 x 66cm
OUT Art Collection
Gift of an anonymous donor under the
Cultural Gifts Program, 1998



Creation series: Earth and sea I-III (II) 1995
lithograph 48.5 x 66cm
QUT Art Collection
Gift of an anonymous donor under the
Cultural Gifts Program, 1998



This is a reproduction of the painting 'Rain, Steam, and Great Smoke' by the English Romantic painter J.M.W. Turner. The painting depicts a dramatic scene of a large, billowing cloud of smoke or steam rising from a body of water, likely a harbor or a river. The smoke is rendered in dark, swirling, and textured brushstrokes, with a bright, glowing light source visible behind it on the left side, creating a strong contrast. The foreground shows the dark, choppy water of the harbor, with a small, dark, rocky outcrop visible in the lower right corner. The overall composition is dynamic and atmospheric, capturing a moment of intense natural or industrial power.

Woman Robin 91

Creation series: Earth and sea I-III 1995
three lithographs each 48.5 x 66cm
QUT Art Collection
Gift of an anonymous donor under the
Cultural Gifts Program, 1998



In each of the lithograph interpretations of these works, the colour appears to float on the surface while the paper is allowed to shine through.

Robinson is an artist who studies his setting intimately so that he can appear as a native, rather than a visitor, and then waits for his subject to arrive. After more than a decade of visiting Paris, particularly favourite haunts, such as the Luxembourg Gardens, the Bastille area where the Atelier Bordas was located, the nearby shops on the Rue St Antoine and the Rue des Rosiers in the Marais, Robinson made a series of colour lithographs in 2006, commenting on observed incidents. Time pressure meant that he restricted the printing to four colours that in turn meant that more of the paper was allowed to shine through, and a luminosity radiates from the prints. In the superb lithograph *Notre Dame*, a great mass of people flow out of the cathedral, their heads merging with the carved kings and prophets on the portals. There may also be a reference to James Ensor's etching *Cathedral* 1886, where a swarm of insect-like figures surround a cathedral façade. In Robinson's Paris lithographs, there is a beautiful lightness and translucence that would be impossible to achieve in any medium other than lithography.

Writing about these lithographs in 2007, Robinson observed:

The beauty of lithography lies in the relationship between the light given off by the paper and the combination of very small dots. At the point of drawing, this relationship is controlled by the artist. These prints were the result of free, direct drawing with no corrections.²⁶

Already when Robinson worked in Paris in 2006, the Atelier Bordas was experiencing considerable threat from new technologies, with digital printers edging out traditional lithographic technologies until the workshop ceased to exist.

Although William Robinson, at the age of 80, told me that he did not think that he would turn to printmaking again, perhaps one should never say never in art. For an artist who has made such a significant contribution to etching and lithography, the temptation of another edition of prints will always remain a live option. His art has never been static and his most recent work possesses a spiritual radiance and a sense of meditative transcendental otherness. As he recently noted: "Art is a reflection of my life; if my life changes, then so will my art, even if it is a reflection of my infirmity."²⁷

- ¹ Pierre Bonnard quoted in John Rewald, *Bonnard* (New York: Albert Carman for The Museum of Modern Art, 1948).
- ² Irving Lavin, *Picasso's lithograph(s): 'The bull(s)' and the history of art in reverse* (Princeton NJ: Institute for Advanced Study, 2009).
- ³ William Robinson undertook art teacher training at the Central Technical College in Brisbane in 1955–56.
- ⁴ William Robinson, taped interview with the author, Brisbane, 6 May 2016.
- ⁵ The Bonnard touring exhibition in 1971 consisted of 40 major canvases that came from the artist's own collection as it stood at the time of his death (it was arranged through Daniel Wildenstein in Paris and Max Harari, Wildenstein's agent in London), and it toured Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney and Perth. In Brisbane, Jon Molvig and Roy Churcher had earlier embraced Bonnard as an important artist for their practice.
- ⁶ This is the etching *Man walking dog* 1976–77, with the plate impression measuring 123 x 173mm.
- ⁷ Various catalogued as *Couple on a bench and birds* or *Feeding the birds* 1976–77, the plate impression is 250 x 200mm and was printed with an artist's proof plus five prints in the edition, but with the artist's proof confusingly numbered a/p 1/6.
- ⁸ Robinson, interview with the author, 6 May 2016.
- ⁹ Ives Colta, Helen Giambruni and Sasha M. Newman, *Pierre Bonnard: The graphic art* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989), 75.
- ¹⁰ There is some discussion of this in Lynn Fern, *William Robinson* (Sydney: Craftsman House, 1995), 40–46.
- ¹¹ Robinson, interview with the author, 6 May 2016.
- ¹² About 24 editions were printed at the Australian Print Workshop between 1990 and 1993 and one more in 1995.
- ¹³ Robinson, interview with the author, 6 May 2016.
- ¹⁴ Bonnard quoted in Colta, Giambruni and Newman, *Pierre Bonnard*, 25.
- ¹⁵ There is a painting of the same title and date measuring 182.5 x 730.5cm in the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales.
- ¹⁶ Robinson, interview with the author, 6 May 2016.
- ¹⁷ A total of seven editions of landscape lithographs were printed, with editions ranging from 75 to 100.
- ¹⁸ Seven lithographic editions were published on this campaign.
- ¹⁹ For example, see Lynne Seear, ed., *Darkness and light: The art of William Robinson* (Brisbane: Queensland Art Gallery, 2001), 145.
- ²⁰ *Pug self portrait* 1991, etching, printed by Louise Taylor in Brisbane, in an edition of 45.
- ²¹ *Self portrait for town and country* 1991, hand-coloured lithograph, printed by Neil Leveson at the Australian Print Workshop, Melbourne, in an edition of 25.
- ²² *Self portrait for town and country* 2004, colour lithograph printed by Franck Bordas and Alberto Thommasi at the Atelier Bordas, Paris, in an edition of 100.
- ²³ Robinson is referring to the Archibald-winning painting *Self portrait with stunned mullet* 1994 and the related colour lithograph of 2004.
- ²⁴ Robinson is referring to the oil painting *Professor John Robinson and brother William* 1992 and the related colour lithograph of 2004.
- ²⁵ Robinson, interview with the author, 6 May 2016.
- ²⁶ William Robinson, "The French lithographs 2000–2006", in *William Robinson: Paintings and lithographs 2000–2007* (Melbourne: Australian Galleries, 2007), 67.
- ²⁷ Robinson, interview with the author, 6 May 2016.

Farmyard with William and Shirley 1984
pencil 54 x 74cm
QUT Art Collection
Donated through the Australian
Government's Cultural Gifts Program
by William Robinson, 2009



Honey, Petunia, Coral, Rosie 1979
conté 57 x 76cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Cow portrait (oval format) 1979
conté 40 x 55.5cm
QUT Art Collection
Donated through the Australian
Government's Cultural Gifts
Program by William Robinson, 2009



Large cow (black) 1985
oil on paper mounted to canvas
81 x 120cm
QUT Art Collection
Purchased 2013



Cow (spotted) 1985
oil on paper 81 x 120cm
QUT Art Collection
Purchased through the William Robinson
Art Collection Fund, 2014



Landscape 22 1987
conté 50 x 65cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Landscape 25 1988
gouache 57 x 76cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Equestrian self portrait 2004
lithograph 54.5 x 76.5cm
OUT Art Collection
Gift of the artist under the
Cultural Gifts Program, 2008



Equestrian self portrait 1987
watercolour 56 x 76cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Landscape 44 1989
watercolour 56 x 76cm
QUT Art Collection
Gift of the artist under the
Cultural Gifts Program, 2008



Landscape 45 1989
watercolour 24 x 34cm
Private collection, Brisbane



William by lamplight 1990
charcoal 30.5 x 45cm
Private collection, Brisbane



William by lamplight 1990
lithograph 56.5 x 56.5cm
QUT Art Collection
Purchased 1990



27/30

William By Lamphart

William Robinson





William by lamplight 1990
oil on linen 137.5 x 197.5cm
Private collection, Brisbane

Landscape 54 1992
watercolour 14 x 19cm
Private collection, Brisbane



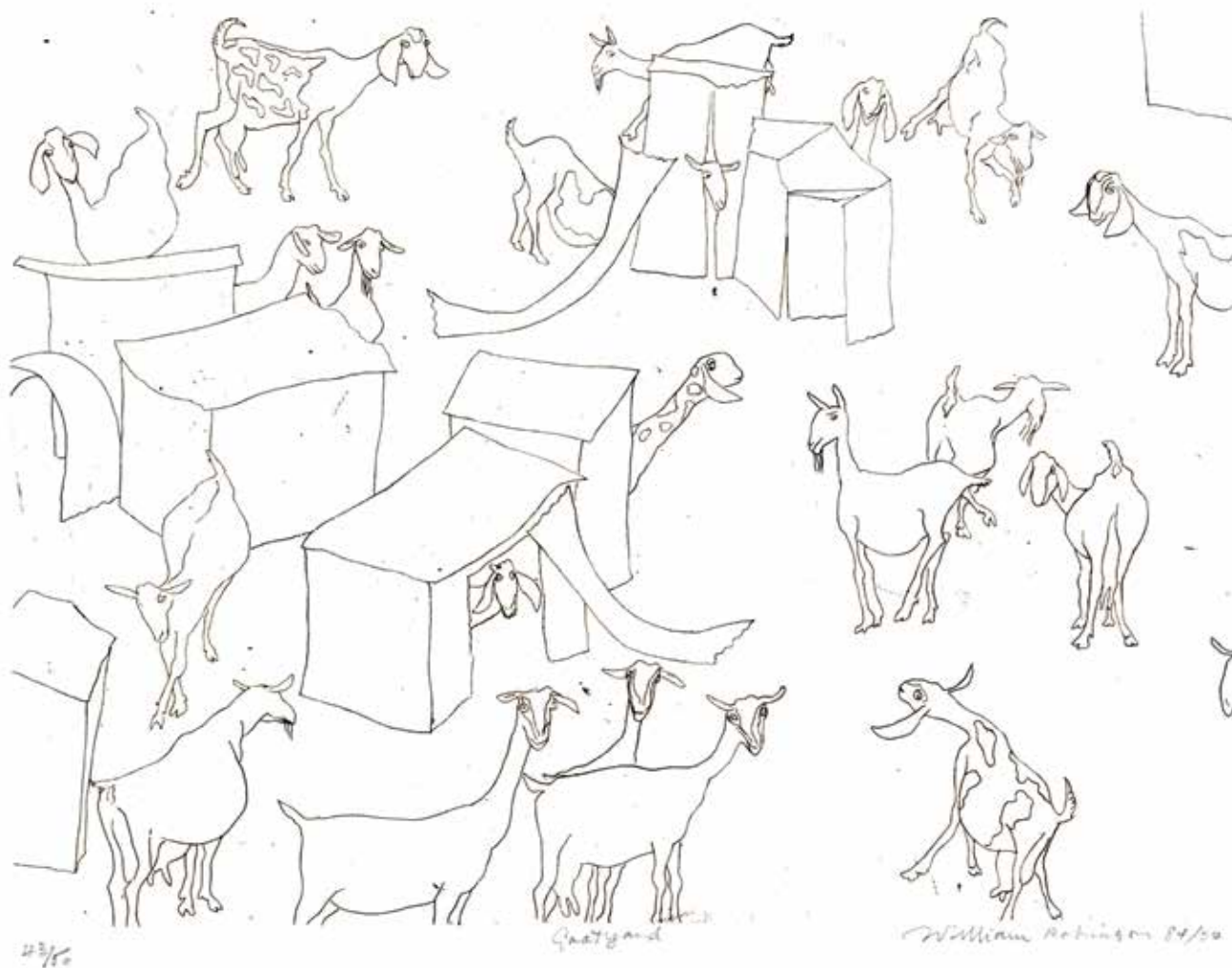
Landscape 56 1992
watercolour 14 x 19cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Landscape 9 1986
watercolour 56 x 76cm
Private collection, Brisbane



Goatyard 1984/2004
etching 22 x 30cm
OUT Art Collection
Donated through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program by William Robinson, 2013



Goats 1984/2003
etching 23 x 30.5cm
QUT Art Collection
Donated through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program by William Robinson, 2013

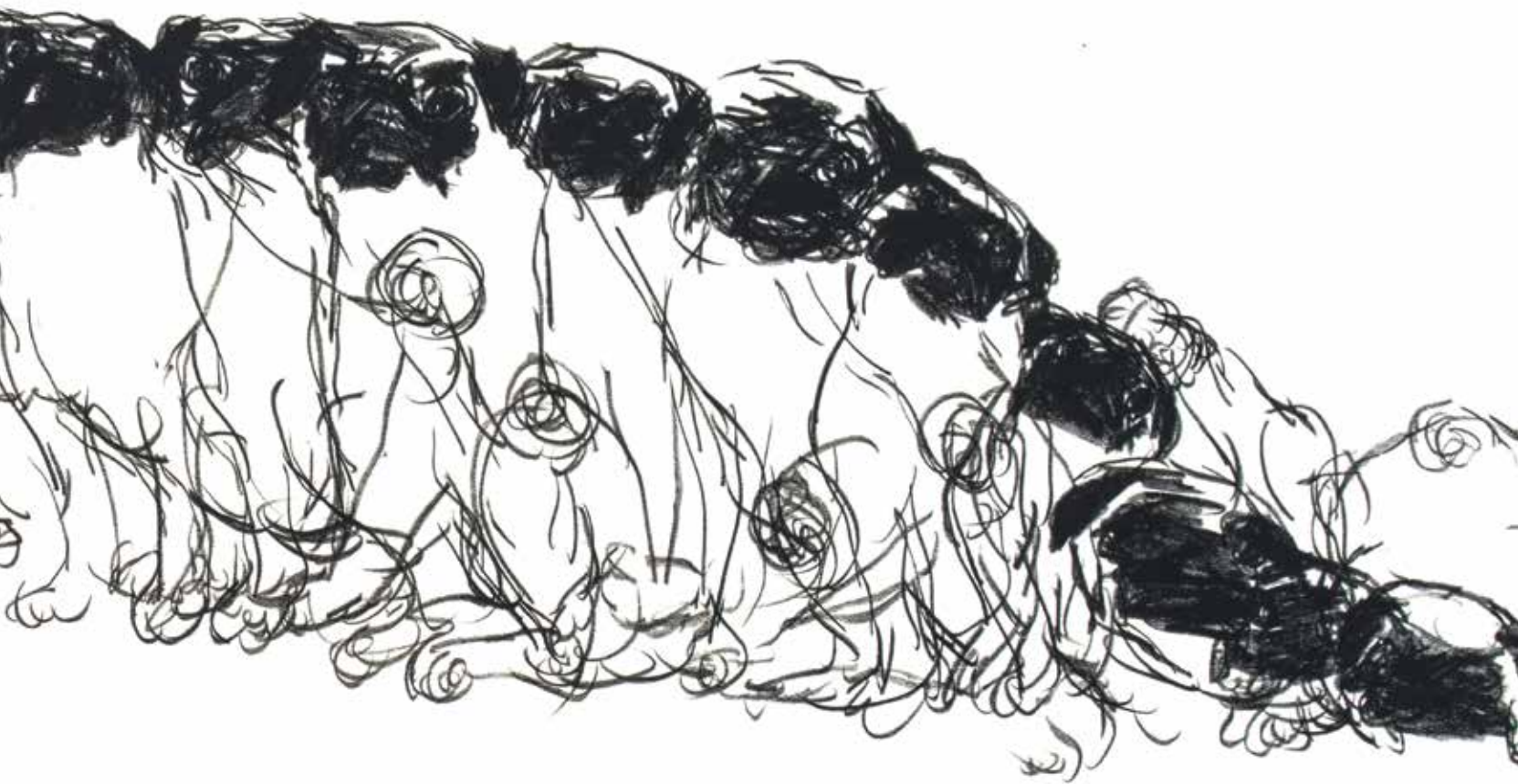


Chookyard 4 1982
pencil 56 x 76cm
Private collection, Brisbane





Kira falling asleep 1980
pencil 56 x 76cm
Private collection, Brisbane



William Rubenstein 80

Publisher

William Robinson Gallery
QUT
GPO Box 2434 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
www.ogh.qut.edu.au/wrgallery

Exhibition Curator Vanessa Van Ooyen

Staff

Executive Director Professor Susan Street AO

Senior Curator Vanessa Van Ooyen

Curator (Public Programs) Megan Williams

Collection/Exhibitions Officer Sheryn Smith

Education Program Officer Pia Robinson/Sarah Barron

Curatorial/Editorial Assistant Katherine Dionysius

Administration Assistant Emma Cain

Conservation Intern Sophie Theobald Clark

Intern Sarah Thompson

Printers ColourChiefs, Brisbane

Editor Evie Franzidis

Designer Dougal Morrison

Contributors

Emeritus Professor Sasha Grishin AM, FAHA

Professor Susan Street AO

Vanessa Van Ooyen

Typeset in Garamond and Avenir Next

Printed on 170gsm Novatech Satin

© QUT and contributors

Apart from fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part of this publication may be reproduced without permission of the publisher. All images are reproduced with the permission of the artist.

ISBN 978-0-85856-002-4

Photography

Richard Stringer and Carl Warner

Published on the occasion of the exhibition

William Robinson: Genesis

28 June 2016 to 18 June 2017

The exhibition and publication have been
presented with the assistance of

PHILIP BACON AM

supporting visual arts at QUT

COVER

Creation landscape: Darkness and light (Study) 1988

coloured pastels 69 x 77cm

QUT Art Collection

Purchased through the William Robinson Art Collection

Fund and partial donation by Philip Bacon, 2010

